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UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 000265

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INL/LP AND WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: SNAR PGOV KCRM KJUS SOCI HO

SUBJECT: HONDURAS SEIZES 90 MORE KILOS OF COCAINE; 2004
TOTAL IS UP TO 1,117.5 KILOS

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 209

¶B. TEGUCIGALPA 203

¶C. TEGUCIGALPA 193

¶D. TEGUCIGALPA 179

¶E. TEGUCIGALPA 80

¶1. On January 31 Honduran police seized 15 kilos of cocaine in Bonito Oriental, and on February 1 the police seized another 75 kilos in Balfate. Both towns are on the Caribbean coast of Honduras near Trujillo. In addition, in the February 1 action police arrested five suspects, and seized cash and weapons.

¶2. These seizures, combined with previous seizures of approximately 25 kilos from an aircraft on January 20 (refs A-D) and approximately 1,000 kilos from an aircraft January 10 (ref E), and a small seizure of 2.5 kilos January 8 from a bus in Choluteca make a total of approximately 1,117.5 kilos seized in 2004. (Note: Honduran authorities believe the plane that crashed January 20 was carrying approximately 1,000 kilos, but most of it was either dropped from the plane prior to the crash or burned in the crash. End Note.)

¶3. The January 31/February 1 seizures represent more successfully coordinated efforts between the military and the INL-funded Frontier Police (as well as the Preventative Police), who have been working jointly in an unprecedented capacity recently.

PALMER